

3/01/09 - Scientific Program Officer

Industry: Nonprofit/Health  
Function: Research, Program Management  
Capacity: Full time

Employer: Prize4Life  
Job Title: Scientific Program Officer  
Job Location: Cambridge, MA

### **Organizational Description**

Prize4Life is a dynamic, start-up, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that aims to create breakthroughs in effective ALS/MND (Lou Gehrig's disease) treatments using the leverage of large inducement prizes. Inspired by the success of other inducement prizes (such as DARPA's Grand Challenge, NASA's Centennial Challenges, and the X Prize Foundation), to date Prize4Life has raised over \$5 million and has launched both a \$1 Million ALS/MND Biomarker Challenge and a \$1 Million ALS Treatment Prize to stimulate scientific breakthroughs in ALS/MND. Website: [www.prize4life.org](http://www.prize4life.org) <<http://www.prize4life.org>>

In addition to offering inducement prizes, Prize4Life is also developing a number of scientific infrastructure-related projects including collaborations with the Alzheimer Research Forum to increase ALS-related scientific communication and develop a comprehensive, unbiased, and regularly updated collection of ALS-related genetic association studies. Furthermore, we are exploring the creation of a database of patient clinical data from failed ALS clinical trials. Prize4Life is also always on the look-out for projects capable of broadly leveraging the ALS research field.

Prize4Life takes pride in its collegial and go-getter culture. As a small 5-person start-up, employees at Prize4Life are expected to demonstrate flexibility and creativity in their day-to-day roles. In pursuit of our important mission, members of the Prize4Life team sometimes must take responsibility for tasks beyond their job description, or work outside standard working hours. At the same time, Prize4Life balances this commitment to mission with a flexible and family-friendly approach. We consider our employees to be our most valuable asset.

### **Job Description**

The Scientific Program Officer is responsible for working closely with the Chief

Scientific Officer (CSO) on the organization's scientific programs, all of which are targeted toward accelerating the identification of treatments and a cure for ALS. Specifically, the Scientific Program Officer will be working on several of the following efforts (depending on the individual's interest, abilities, and experience):

- The design, launch and management of additional ALS inducement prizes;
- The design and launch of infrastructure programs designed to broadly leverage efforts across the ALS research field;
- Relationship building with the scientific community, including outreach beyond the immediate ALS/MND research community, and fostering the building of networks across ALS-relevant teams and disciplines

In this role, the Scientific Program Officer is expected to demonstrate both rigorous and creative scientific and analytical breadth and increasing self-sufficiency and project ownership. This position is critical to Prize4Life's growth and development and we are looking for an individual capable of growing with the organization. Travel will be required for this position (1-2 trips/quarter on average, mainly for scientific meeting attendance).

Responsibilities will include:

### **Outreach and relationship-building with the scientific community**

- Developing and maintaining close relationships with academic, government, and industry researchers as part of building and managing successful programs to accelerate the identification and development of treatments and a cure for ALS:
  - Helping to identify strategic partners (via networking and research)
  - Helping to identify potential prize teams from disciplines outside of neuroscience/neurology (via networking and research)
  - Attending scientific meetings periodically
- Staying current with cutting edge ALS research and related fields of research

## **Program/Project Management**

- Working with the CSO to design and execute programs, including both prize-based programs and infrastructure/resource-based programs for the research community. Program management including:
  - developing budget estimates and identifying personnel needs
  - developing project plans and timelines
  - achieving milestones in a timely fashion
  - preparing weekly updates for the CSO
  - preparing monthly written and tri-annual oral project progress reports for Prize4Life's Board of Directors
- Working with the CSO to evaluate program impacts, including developing evaluation criteria and processes
- Trouble-shooting and problem-solving

As Prize4Life is a small but growing start-up, like the rest of the staff the Scientific Program Officer may be asked from time to time to handle or assist with other tasks and responsibilities not enumerated herein.

## **Qualifications**

Please compose a tailored cover letter that describes your interest in furthering the mission of Prize4Life and how your experience satisfies the following:

- Expert scientific background (PhD, MD, or MD/PhD in Neuroscience or related field)
- Demonstrated ability to work with scientists in a staff role
- Interest in learning about new areas of science and technology and considering their application/translation to ALS/MND
- Strong oral and written communication skills, capable of communicating effectively with scientific as well as non-scientific audiences (writing sample may be requested)
- An ability to think strategically as well as develop and execute detailed plans
- Experience and interest in working as part of a highly capable team or organization, especially a nonprofit, and the ability to drive results across functional areas
- Strong interpersonal and people management skills
- Self-directed and able to work independently without the need for direct supervision

- Proven problem-solving skills
- Entrepreneurial approach, proactive and action-oriented personality; strong sense of pace and urgency
- Comfortable working in the dynamic, flexible, and often unpredictable environment of a start-up
- Willingness to travel
- Previous program management experience beyond benchwork valued but not required

Preferred Start Date: Flexible

Compensation: Commensurate with experience

Sponsor International Candidates: No

To Apply

AA/EOE. No phone calls, please. Email cover letter and resume to [jobs@prize4life.org](mailto:jobs@prize4life.org) <<mailto:jobs@prize4life.org>> (Subject line: Scientific Program Officer)

Dr. Melanie Leitner

Chief Scientific Officer

Prize4Life, Inc.

PO Box 425783

Cambridge, MA 02142

Email: [jobs@prize4life.org](mailto:jobs@prize4life.org) <<mailto:jobs@prize4life.org>> (Subject line: Scientific Program Officer)